40. Abolition of toll-gates.

MR. LUKOSE LUKOSE (*Kunnatnad taluk, Group I*) spoke about the need for the abolition of toll-gates. He said that the subject had been discussed at length in Legislative Council and a resolution recommending the abolition of tolls passed. But the resolution had not been given effect to. At the time tolls were first levied, there was no Legislative Council with a non-official majority to protest. There was no special reason to tax the people with that burden especially when there was a surplus budget. The only excuse for the levy was the cost involved in frequently repairing roads. A toll was an impediment to traffic and a bar to the free use of public roads. Roads were intended for the use of the people and to restrict their use in particular ways was not fair. A person walking along a road need not pay toll but when that person used a vehicle, it was subject to the levy of toll. That was not just. All roads were intended for the free use of the people in whatever way they lived. Persons who used vehicles also paid land tax as much as pedestrians and even more. They had therefore the right to use the roads more than other people. Further the bullock, carts and waggons spoiled the roads to a greater extent than motor buses and cars. The latter had afforded added facilities for transport and travel. Besides being useful to the public in general, they also to a certain extent solved the problem of unemployment in employing many persons as drivers, conductors, etc. Apart from tolls, a large amount was being recovered from the employees on account of license fees and also from the owners in the shape of income tax. In view of the above facts, it was high time that the levy of toll was stopped. In British India the subject was being seriously considered. The Travancore Government also should take up the question without further delay.

The rates of toll levied in Travancore were much higher than those levied in British India or Cochin. There was also no principle in locating toll-gates. While in some places they were 10 or 12 miles apart, in others they are 40 or 50 miles apart. There was also no uniformity in levying tolls by Municipal Councils. Some levied tolls, but others did not.

In conclusion, the member once more prayed for the abolition of the levy of toll.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Lukose, as you yourself said, this is not a new subject to Government. This was discussed thereadbare in the Legislative Council, so that no reply is necessary for you now. All your suggestions will be duly noted for careful consideration.

The Assembly adjourned at 5-5 P. M. to meet again at 11-30 A. M the next day.

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